



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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State Health Department and Local Public Health Units Schedule Statewide Immunization Forums

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health and the state’s local public health units will be hosting a series of six Immunization Forums across the state beginning October 16. The purpose of the forums is to develop guidelines and strategies for the North Dakota Immunization Program in the face of declining federal funding and increased vaccination recommendations.

“The Department of Health is at a critical point for strategizing how we move forward with the Immunization Program in North Dakota” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “In the past, the state health department supplied all recommended vaccinations to providers throughout the state to immunize all North Dakota children. However, the Immunization Program currently is facing both reductions in federal funding and increases in the number of recommended vaccinations and their associated costs. Because of this, decisions need to be made regarding the future of the state’s Immunization Program.”

Ways to increase North Dakota’s childhood immunization rates also will be discussed at the forums. “The nation’s goal is to immunize 90 percent of all children ages 19 months to 35 months,” Dwelle said. “Although North Dakota’s current immunization rate of 78.7 percent is slightly higher than the national average, North Dakota’s rates are remaining stable instead of increasing.”

The forums will be held in six North Dakota cities and facilitated by the Department of Health and local public health units. Physicians, nurses, local public health and tribal health personnel, legislators and others have been invited to the forums. The forums will be held from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. local time. The public also is welcome to attend.

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Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

The following schedule indicates forum locations and dates:

City	Date	Location
Fargo	October 16, 2006	Holiday Inn
Grand Forks	October 17, 2006	Alerus Center
Williston	October 19, 2006	Community Library
Bismarck	October 23, 2006	Public Works Building
Minot	October 24, 2006	First District Health Unit
Dickinson	October 26, 2006	Dickinson City Hall

“Every child in North Dakota is precious,” Dwelle said. “These forums provide an opportunity for immunization stakeholders to provide input concerning how we can best continue to reach our children with lifesaving vaccinations.”

For more information about the statewide immunization forums or the North Dakota Immunization Program, contact Molly Sander, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

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